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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Disaster preparedness financial relief through ‘Sales Tax Holiday,’ ‘Sheltering at Home for Recovery Continuation’ for limited Ian repairs

May 31, 2023 – The State of Florida is offering disaster preparedness financial assistance through two programs: the 2023 Disaster Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday and the UNITE Florida Sheltering at Home for Recovery Continuation (SHRC) Program.

“On the surface, it sounds odd to tie in recovery from last year with disaster preparedness for this year, but we want our residents to regain their balance – get back on solid footing – to be ready for the upcoming season,” said Emergency Management Director Jonathan Lord. “The really great change to this year’s legislation for the Sales Tax Holiday signed by Governor Ron DeSantis is that there is a two-week period for the financial relief now through Friday, June 9, and a second period right before the peak of hurricane season, August 26 through September 8.”

Details of the UNITE Florida Sheltering at Home for Recovery Continuation (SHRC) Program are as follows:

- It helps eligible homeowners with limited repairs, so they can live in their home while completing their recovery from Hurricane Ian
- Applicants must have applied for FEMA Assistance and have an Applicant ID number
- Additional details are available at <https://ianrecovery.fl.gov/unite> or 800-892-0948

The official start of hurricane season is days away, June 1, and Lord is urging residents to prepare early by shopping locally and taking advantage of the current Disaster Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday that runs until June 9.

During this sales tax holiday, items related to disaster preparedness are exempt from sales tax. This year’s holiday has expanded on the pet supplies that are included.

“The addition of pet supplies is fabulous, as our pets are our family members. We ask residents to have a number of emergency supplies ready, and this is the perfect time to buy what you need or replace anything that may be out of date – all while saving a little money on the sales tax,” said Emergency Management Director Jonathan Lord. “Remember to test things like flashlights and replace outdated batteries.”

Andy Dance
District 1

Greg Hansen
District 2

David Sullivan
District 3

Leann Pennington
District 4

Donald O’Brien, Jr.
District 5

Lawmakers agreed to lift sales taxes during the holiday on the following items: pet carriers that cost \$100 or less, as well as over-the-counter pet medications and large bags of cat and dog food weigh 50 or fewer pounds and up to the \$100 price point; pet beds that cost \$40 or less; bags of cat litter that cost \$25 or less; leashes, collars, muzzles, and pet pads that sell for \$20 or less; packages of pet-waste disposable bags that cost \$15 or less; hamster and rabbit substrate that sells for \$15 or; and, other cat and dog food that sell individually or in a box or case up to \$10.

Safety items such as smoke detectors, fire extinguishers and carbon-monoxide detectors that cost \$70 or less are on the list.

“As with food, water, and medications, we recommend having seven days’ worth of supplies at the ready – not just for hurricanes, but all emergencies,” Lord said. “Use this sales tax holiday to buy essentials as your first step in preparedness.”

The qualifying list of items includes the following: reusable ice packs; batteries (AAA, AA, C, D, 6-volt, and 9-volt only); two-way and weather band radios that are powered by battery, solar or hand-crank (some qualify even if electrical cords are included); coolers and ice chests; portable power banks; tarps; ground anchor systems; laundry detergent; toilet paper; paper towels; paper napkins; facial tissues; hand soap; body wash; sunblock; dish soaps and detergents (including for dishwashers); cleaning and disinfecting wipes and sprays; trash bags; and, portable generators selling for less than \$3,000 to be used for providing light, communications or to preserve food in the event of a power outage.

Remember to shop locally.

“Another thing we would ask residents is to do now is to take a moment to sign up for emergency notifications at www.FlaglerCounty.gov/AlertFlagler,” Lord said. “If you know someone with special medical needs, such as someone who requires electricity, refrigeration for medication, or oxygen – or someone who would require transportation assistance to evacuate – encourage them to enroll in our Special Needs Registry.”

Go to www.FlaglerCounty.gov/emergency and select “Individuals with Special Needs” to register for special needs evacuation and sheltering assistance.

For more information about the 2023 Disaster Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday go to <https://floridarevenue.com/disasterprep/Pages/default.aspx>.

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